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Grammar and Rhetoric
in Euthymius Zigabenus' Commentary
on *Psalms* 1–50

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The *Commentary on Psalms* of Euthymius Zigabenus was first published in the West in Venice, in 1763, by A. Bongiovanini, together with a translation (of sorts) by Saul, the bishop of Brugnato.¹ Zigabenus' skill as a commentator was recognized by Vossius (1661) and admired by Père Simon before the Venice edition,² and evidently was also admired by Nicephorus Blemnydes, who seems to have borrowed rather extensively from Zigabenus in his commentaries on *Psalms*.³ Zigabenus' work is, in any event, one of the few complete commentaries on *Psalms* which survive from the Byzantine exegetical tradition.

The merits of Zigabenus' commentary were noted by Martin Jugie in a brief article he published in 1912, substantially repeating the judgment of Krumbacher.⁴ Both indicate that Zigabenus' principal sources are to be found in Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, and Hesychius of Jerusalem.⁵ True as that may be in broad "doctrinal" terms (Zigabenus' occasional references to the anagogic sense of a phrase or verse are consistent with those used by these predecessors), there is an important aspect of Zigabenus' exegetical practice which cannot be derived from these

¹ This is the text published in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 128. On the publishing history, see Martin Jugie, art. "Euthymius Zigabène," *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* 5, col. 1580.

² R. Simon, *Histoire critique des principaux commentateurs du Nouveau Testament* (1693), p. 409; I. Vossius, *De septuaginta interpretibus* (1661), p. 67.

³ I have examined this question in "Blemnydes' Debt to Euthymios Zigabenos," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 26 (1985), 303–09.

⁴ See M. Jugie, "La vie et les oeuvres d'Euthyme Zigabène," *Échos d'Orient* 15 (1912), 215–25; K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Litteratur* (1897), p. 83.

⁵ Jugie, "La vie," 220; Krumbacher, *loc. cit.*

"principal sources" and which, to my knowledge, has never been noted, explored, or explained. I refer to the frequent clarification Zigabenus is able to bring to the text as a result of his grammatical and rhetorical observations, examples of which I have gathered from his comments on *Psalms* 1-50. Some recognition of this aspect of his work is in order, since it is so crucial to his exegesis. His use of grammar and rhetoric raises, as well, important questions about the nature of the "tradition" behind his commentary, and the setting in which it was composed.⁶

I

1. Grammar

(a) Syntactical observations. On two dozen occasions or so, Zigabenus makes observations on syntactical problems in the Greek: e.g., *ad* 22:4, 305A:

ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἡ σύνταξις οὕτως, "Αὐταί με παρεκάλεσαν, ἡ
ῥάβδος σου καὶ ἡ βακτηρία σου." "παρεκάλεσαν" ἀντὶ τοῦ
"ἐνουθέτησαν." ὁ γὰρ νουθετῶν, παρακαλεῖ καὶ ἔλκει πρὸς
τὸ συμφέρον....

Compare *ad* 16:4, 216A; 26:3, 321A; 28:5, 333D; 28:6, 336A; 28:9, 337A; 31:8, 364D,⁷ all of which are equally elementary. In addition to these, Zigabenus' observations sometimes focus on apparent pleonasm: e.g., *ad* 35:2, 405CD:

τὸ "φησὶν" ἀντὶ τοῦ "οἶεται," νοήσεις· καὶ τὸ "τοῦ" περιττόν·
ἵν' ἢ τοιοῦτος ὁ νοῦς, οἶεται ὁ παράνομος ἀμαρτάνειν . . .
τουτέστιν ἐν μόνῃ τῇ ἑαυτοῦ συνειδήσει λεληθότως ὥς μηδὲν
τοῦ θεοῦ βλέποντος. . . .

Compare *ad* 36:22, 421B; 34:24, 404A; 36:25, 421D; 37:11, 433C; 38:7, 444A.⁸ These observations coordinate with others which we will see later on the general subject of the difficulties caused by apparent pleonasm.

(b) "Hebraisms." Sometimes syntactical problems arise, Zigabenus teaches, from the persistence of Hebrew "idiom" in the LXX translation. Cf., e.g., *ad* 24:6:

⁶ I have used the less than perfect text in Migne, limiting my observations to the first fifty *Psalms*. Nothing Zigabenus does later alters the general picture we get from his comments on 1-50.

⁷ See also *ad* 17:26, καὶ ἔστι τὸ σχῆμα, ὄνομα ἀντὶ μετοχῆς, "ὄσιος" ἀντὶ τοῦ "ὄσιων"; 24:6; 24:8; 34:1; 34:14; 36:1; 37:11 (noting a pleonasm); 38:6; 41:6; 43:4; 44:6; 49:19.

⁸ See also *ad* 4:4, 93C; 24:11, 309B (involves Hebraism); 39:9, 453B; 39:13, 456D; 40:9, 465A; 43:22, 485C (in the midst of a series of observations on periphrasis).

τὰ “ἐλέη” δὲ ἀδιαφόρως κατὰ αἰτιατικὴν πτώσιν
τεθείκασιν οἱ ἑρμηνεῖς, ἢ ὥς καὶ τῆς Ἑβραϊδος λέξεως
ἐκείνης τοιαύτην ἐχούσης πτώσιν,

and *ad* 41:5, 469B:

χρὴ δὲ καθόλου γινώσκειν, ὥς ἡ τῶν Ἑβραίων διάλεκτος,
ἀδιαφόρως ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον, ταῖς συντάξεσι κέχρηται,
καθάπερ καὶ νῦν, “ἐπ’ ἐμὲ” εἰποῦσα ἀντὶ τοῦ “ἐν ἐμοί.”

See also *ad* 24:11, 309B; 38:6, 441D; 41:5, 469B; 50:21, 560D (explains enallagē of tense). “Hebraism” also explains, for instance, why the plural is sometimes found instead of the singular: e.g., 2:1–2, 80D; 8:4, 133A; 9:11, 145D; 15:6, 200C; 18:2, 252A; 47:3, 520B; or explains instances of *periphrasis*: *ad* 4:3, 93B; 8:5, 133D, and so on.⁹ Often the sense of the Greek is clear only when one knows the Hebrew “idiom,” as at, for example, 9:28, 157C; 30:3, 348BC; 30:11, 352C.¹⁰ Most of what Zigabenus knew of Hebrew, presumably, was received information.

2. Schemes and Tropes

Zigabenus frequently identifies and explains the Psalmist's use of schemes and tropes.

(a) κατὰχρησις: *ad* 7:3, 117A:

καταχρηστικωτέρα δὲ τῆς “ἀρπαγῆς” ἡ λέξις, ἐντεῦθεν
δηλούσης ἀφαίρεσιν,

and *ad* 8:8, 136C; and 48:9 f., 529C:

τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ “ζήσεται εἰς τέλος,” ζῶν δὲ λέγει τὴν κυρίως
καὶ ἄπονον· ἡ γὰρ ἐνταῦθα καταχρηστικῶς, ὥς
παραδίδεται,

the last words of which also indicate received tradition.

(b) βραχυλογία: *ad* 26:3, 321A; 28:9, 337A; 34:24, 404A; and, of particular interest, *ad* 11:7:

λογία δὲ εἶπεν, οὐ καθ’ ὑποκρισμὸν εὐτελείας, ἀλλ’ ὅτι τοὺς
χρησμοὺς λογία [i.e., oracles] ἐκάλουν διὰ τὴν βραχυλογίαν
αὐτῶν. ἐν ὀλίγαις γὰρ λέξεσι, μεγάλην δύναμιν ἐννοίας
ἐμπεριεῖχον.

⁹ Also, *ad* 19:1, 265A; 24:5, 305C; 24:11, 390C; 37:8, 443A; 38:7, 444B; 39:2, 448D; 41:5, 469B; 47:3, 520B.

¹⁰ See also 39:2, 448D; 7 Prol., 113D; 9:28, 157C; 9:6, 144B; 9:11, 145D f.

Zigabenus, in short, makes clear what he sees as David's rhetorical aim here. We shall see more of this below.

(c) ἐκ παραλλήλου: At *ad* 43:4, 480C, Zigabenus is able to settle a dispute by reference to this *schema*:

(ἀλλ' ἡ δεξιὰ σου, καὶ ὁ βραχίον σου) τινὲς δεξιὰν μὲν, λέγουσι τὴν βοήθειαν· τινὲς δὲ, τὴν δύναμιν. ἄλλοι δὲ καὶ ἄμφω τὴν δύναμιν σημαίνειν ἐκ παραλλήλου.

See also *ad* 8:5, 133D; 36:8, 416C; 38:13, 448A.

(d) πλεονασμός: Zigabenus notes several instances of figurative *pleonasmus* (as recognized and defined by the authors of the rhetorical handbooks)¹¹ particularly as achieved by ἐπίτασις, ἀναδίπλωσις, περίφρασις, and ὑπερβατόν.

1. ἐπίτασις:¹² 2:12, 88AB; 6:7, 111B; 9:6, 144B (τὸ "εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος," ἐπίτασις, ἀντὶ τοῦ μέχρι παντός); 39:1, 448D (ὅτι "ὑπομένων ὑπέμεινα," ὁ τοιοῦτος διπλασιασμός, συνήθης μὲν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις· ἐστὶ δὲ ἐμφαντικὸς ἐπιτάσεως, ὡς τὸ "ἰδὼν ἰδὼν" καὶ "γινώσκων γνώση"). See also *ad* 48:2, 525BC.

2. ἀναδίπλωσις:¹³ We see an example at 39:2, cited just above; but see also *ad* 1:4, 77C; 21:5, 277B (*emphasis* noted there, τοῦ); 23:8, 301B; 34:21, 401B (τὸ "εὗγε," παλαιὸν ἦν ἐπιφώνημα τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων οὗ ἡῦχοντο διὰ τοῦ διπλασιασμοῦ τὴν ἄγαν ἡδονὴν τοῦ πράγματος ἐμφαίνον); 49:7, 541D (see below, p. 270, section I. 3).

3. περίφρασις:¹⁴ Cf., e.g., *ad* 4:3, 93B (mentioned above under "Hebraisms"); 5:13, 108A ("υἱὸν" γὰρ καλεῖ "δυνάμεως" τὸν δυνατὸν, καὶ "ἄνδρα αἰμάτων" τὸν φονικόν); 7:6, 120B; 10:1, 165B; 16:13, 213B (. . . ἢ, τῶν πολεμούντων "τῇ χειρὶ σου," δηλαδὴ "σοι," περιφραστικῶς); 28:2, 332D; 32:21, 380A;

¹¹ Phoebammon, π. σχ. 8.498 f. Walz, lists eleven kinds of pleonasm: ταυτολογία, ἀναδίπλωσις, ἐπαναφορά, ἐπάνοδος, ἐπανάληψις, περίφρασις, ἐπίφρασις, παρονομασία, ἐπεξηγήσις, ἐπιμονή, and ἐπίτασις. This tradition goes back at least to the second century (cf. Tryphon and Tiberios on *schemata*) and carries on through the later Greek Middle Ages.

¹² Cf., e.g., Phoebammon 8.501W: ἐπίτασις is an ἐπιμονῆς εἶδος οὐκ ἐπίσης δὲ δηλοῦν τὸ πρᾶγμα. Compare John Sikeliotes *In Herm. de ideis* 6.56 ff. W; "Phoebammon," *In Herm. de ideis*, Rabe *Prolegomenon Sylloge* 377.17, 378.5.

¹³ Cf. Alexander 8.462W; Phoebammon 8.499W; Zonaios 8.682W; Anon. 8.707W.

¹⁴ See Phoebammon 8.500W (achieves μεγαλοπρεπεία); Zonaios 8. 689W; Tryphon 8.742W (περίφρασις . . . πλείοσι λέξεσι παριστάνουσα μετ' αὐξήσεως τὸ ὑποκείμενον πρᾶγμα); Gregory of Corinth 8.771W (διὰ πλειόνων αὐτὸ τὸ κύριον δηλοῦσα, πρὸς αὐξήσιν τοῦ σημαινομένου).

34:12, 397B; 37:4, 429C (τὸ “ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς ὀργῆς σου,” καὶ “ἀπὸ προσώπου τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν μου,” καὶ “ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς ἀφροσύνης μου,” καὶ τοιαῦτα, κατὰ περίφρασιν εἴρηται, ἀντὶ τοῦ “διὰ τὴν ὀργὴν σου” . . .).¹⁵

4. ὑπερβατόν:¹⁶ *ad* 13:1, 181C (νοοῖτο δ’ ἂν καθ’ ὑπερβατόν ὁ στίχος, ὅτι “διεφθάρησαν” ἐν ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ ἐβδελύχθησαν); 39:5, 449CD:

ἔστι δὲ ἡ τοῦ παρόντος ῥητοῦ σύνταξις οὕτως· “μακάριος, οὗ αὐτοῦ ἐστὶ τὸ ὄνομα Κυρίου ἐλπίς.” δυνάμεθα δὲ καὶ ἄλλως τοῦτο νοῆσαι περὶ τῶν Χριστιανῶν, καθ’ ὑπερβατόν συντάττοντες οὕτως· “μακάριος, οὗ ἐστὶν ἐλπίς τὸ ὄνομα Κυρίου αὐτοῦ”· παντὶ δὲ Χριστιανῷ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστὶν ἐλπίς καὶ σωτηρία.

Cf. also *ad* 44:6, 493A.

(e) μεταφορά:¹⁷ Zigabenus frequently notes those passages where he thinks David is expressing himself “metaphorically,” a term which covers a wide range of expressions. Cf., e.g., *ad* 2:12, 88AB (see under *epitasis* above); 16:7, 209D:

ἐτέραν εἰκόνα φυλακῆς εὐρῶν . . . ἐκ μεταφορᾶς τῶν ταῖς ἑαυτῶν πτέρυξι σκεπόντων τοὺς νεοττοὺς πετεινῶν . . . ;

22:2, 292C; 44:7, 493C (“ὁ θρόνος” βασιλείας ὧν σύμβολον, τὴν βασιλείαν αἰνίττεται); 48:5, 528B.¹⁸ We might include here two instances of synecdoche (not explicitly identified as such by Z.): *ad* 21:5, 281B (“κοιλίαν” δὲ λέγει νῦν, τὸ κοῖλον ὅλον τοῦ σώματος) and 50:10, 556B (ἀπὸ μέρους δὲ, τῶν ὁστών, ὅλον ἑαυτὸν ἐνέφηνε).

(f) ἐρώτησις:¹⁹ Cf. *ad* 14:1, 189B (λοιπὸν οὖν ἀνακτέον τὰ ῥητά· σχηματίζει τὸν λόγον ὁ Δαβὶδ εἰς ἐρώτησιν . . .); 14:2, 189D (τοῦτο τῆς ἐρωτήσεως ἡ ἀπόκρισις, ὡς ἐκεῖνος παροικῇ); 18:4, 252D; 23:3, 300A (δὲ ἐρώτησιν σχηματίσας ὁ Προφήτης τὸ προλαβὼν ῥητόν).²⁰

¹⁵ See also *ad* 8:5, 133D (Hebraism); 26:11 f., 325AB; 28:3, 333B (ιδίωμα . . . τῆς παλαιᾶς); 37:13, 436A; 41:6, 472A; 43:21, 485BC; 43:25, 448A.

¹⁶ Cf., e.g., Tiberios, π. σχ. 8.561W; Phoebammon 8.501W; Zonaios 8.689W; Anon., 8.713W.

¹⁷ Cf. Tryphon 8.729W (λέξις μεταφερομένη ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου ἐπὶ τὸ μὴ κύριον, ἐμφάσεως ἢ ὁμοιώσεως ἕνεκα; cf. Anon. 8.715W and Choroiboskos 8.804W).

¹⁸ See also *ad* 6:18, 129A; 8:5, 133C; 16:13, 213A; 26:5, 321D; 27:1, 328A; 40:9, 465B; 45:7, 509C; 46:2, 513B.

¹⁹ Cf., e.g., Phoebammon 8.496W; Herodian 8.597W (ἐρώτησις ἐστὶ λόγος ἐν ὑποκρίσει λεγόμενος ἐπὶ τῷ σαφέστερον γινῶναι τι τῶν ἐπιζητουμένων). Also, Anon., π. σχ. 8.632W.

²⁰ See also *ad* 38:8, 445A; 40:9, 465A; 48:5, 528C; 48:8, 529A.

(g) πρόσωπον / προσωποποιία:²¹ Cf. *ad* 13:7, 188A; 26:8, 324C (πρόσωπον δὲ τοῦ Δαβὶδ αὐτὸς ὁ Δαβὶδ, κατὰ περίφρασιν); 49:3, 541A (σκόπει δὲ ὅτι καὶ Μωυσῆς εἰσαγαγὼν τὸν λαὸν εἰς τὴν γῆν μάρτυρας τῶν συνθηκῶν παρέλαβεν . . . ἔστι δὲ τὸ σχῆμα προσωποποιία, ὅτι τοῖς ἀνύχοις ἐμψύχων σώματα περιτίθεμεν).

(h) ἔμφασις:²² Forceful expression (including that which, in English, "emphasizes") and allusive or connotative expression (where *emphasis* comes close to *ainigma*) are both results of many of the schemata we have seen in Zigabenus' commentaries on the text. See, e.g., *ad* 9:30, 160C:

ἐξηγεῖται δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀρπαγὴν ὅτι ἑλκυσμός ἐστι, διὰ δὲ τῆς ἐπαναλήψεως τοῦ ὀνόματος ἀρπαγῆς, ἐμφαίνει σχετλιασμόν. ἦ καὶ διὰ τῆς συνεχείας τῶν παθητικῶν ῥημάτων, διεγείρει τὸν θεὸν εἰς ἄμυσον.

Also, *ad* 17:4, 221B:

τοσαῦτα εἰπὼν, ἀνακυκλοῖ τὸν λόγον καὶ καταλέγει τοὺς ποικίλους αὐτοῦ κινδύνους, καὶ τὰς πολυειδεῖς ἐπικουρίας τοῦ θεοῦ. τροπικώτερον δὲ τῇ διηγήσει πρὸς πλείονα τῶνπραγμάτων ἐμφασιν.

And cf. *ad* 18:4, 253B; 21:5, 277B; 24:4, 305A; 27:1, 325D; 27:4, 328D (ταυτολογία); 28:1, 322B (ἀναδίπλωσις); 36:14, 417D; 41:3, 468D (ἢ λέξις ἐμφαίνει); 44:2, 489A; 45:9, 512BC. Some of these we shall see later.

3. Rhetoric/Audience

Zigabenus' readings frequently go beyond the traditional "grammatical" identification of odd expressions and standard schemes and tropes as they appear in the text. On more than two dozen occasions in his remarks on the first fifty *Psalms* he explains the rhetorical function of a given expression, namely, the intended rhetorical effect on the audience. See, for example, *ad* 7:14, 125AB, which I quote *in extenso*:

χρὴ δὲ γινώσκειν, ὥς εἰ καὶ ἀνθρώπινα τὰ ῥήματα, ἀλλὰ θεοπρεπῆ τὰ νοήματα· καὶ παρέλαβε τὴν παχύτητα τῶν λέξεων, ὥστε τῆς τῶν ἀκροατῶν παχύτητος καθικέσθαι.

²¹ Cf. Phoebammon 8.509W; Chiroboskos 8.816W (who cites *Ps.* 19:1 as an example); and Anon., *περὶ ποιητικῶν τρ.*, 8.722W (ἢ τοῖς ἀνύχοις πρόσωπον προτιθεῖσα καὶ λόγους αὐτοῖς ἀρμοδίους προσάπτουσα; with which Zigabenus *ad* 49:3, quoted below, should be compared).

²² Cf. Tiberios, π. τρ. 8.543W (ὅταν μὴ αὐτὸ τις λέγῃ τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἀλλὰ δι' ἐτέρων ἐμφαίνει); Planudes, σχ. εἰς Ἰδεῶν, 5.479 f. W.

διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ ῥομφαίαν εἰσάγει τὸν θεὸν ἔχοντα, καὶ τόξον, καὶ βέλη, καὶ σκεύη πολεμικά, καὶ στιλβοῦντα, καὶ ἐντείνοντα, ἵνα τὸν φόβον τοῖς ἀκροαταῖς ἀπὸ τούτων αὐξήσῃ, καὶ διὰ τῶν συντρόφων ὀνομάτων κατασεῖσθαι τὴν λιθίνην αὐτῶν διάνοιαν. . . .

Zigabenus' comments *ad* 16:12, 212D are also worth noting:

οὐδὲν δὲ κωλύει ταῦτό καὶ ἄμφω δηλοῦν· εἴωθε γὰρ πολλάκις ἐν τοῖς παθητικοῖς λόγοις ὁ Προφήτης ταυτολογεῖν, ἐν ὑπαλλαγαῖς λέξεως, ἵνα αὐξήσῃ τὸ πάθος, εἰς ἔλεον ἐπισπάσῃται.

See also *ad* 24:4, 305A:

τὸ αὐτὸ δι' ἀμφοτέρων λέγει τῶν ῥητῶν, ὡς εἴωθε ποιεῖν ἐν πολλοῖς, ἐμφανῶν τὴν τάσιν . . . τῆς καρδίας.

31:8, 364D:

εἰρήκαμεν δὲ πολλάκις, ὅτι ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων διαθέσεων ἡ γραφὴ σχηματίζει τὰ θεῖα, συνκαταβαίνουσα τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ τῶν ἀκρωμένων.

36:8, 416D:

ὅρα δὲ ὅπως ἐν ἀρχῇ τὸ “μὴ παραζήλου,” δύσφρασιν τέθεικε. παρακατιῶν δὲ, σαφέστερον αὐτὸ προστέθηκε· νῦν δὲ τέλεον αὐτὸ ἐσαφήνισεν πολλάκις δὲ, τὰ αὐτὰ λέγει, καὶ ἄνω καὶ κάτω στρέφει, βεβαίαν τὴν διδασκαλίαν ταῖς τῶν ἀκροατῶν ψυχαῖς ἐναπεργάσασθαι διὰ τῆς συνεχείας. . . .

49:7, 541D:

ἐδιπλασίασε δὴ τὸ “ὁ θεὸς” εἰς διασυρμὸν τῆς ἀναισθησίας καὶ παχύτητος τῶν ἀκοῶν αὐτῶν.

Cf. also *ad* 21:5, 277B; 23:8, 301C; 36:14, 417D; 36:25, 424A; 36:30, 425A; 36:34, 428A; 48:2, 525BC; 49:1, 527C.

II

It is clear from this brief conspectus that Zigabenus has a good deal to say in his Commentary on grammatical and rhetorical matters. His observations are scattered, uneven, and unsystematic, however. On *Psalms* 12, 20, and 29, for instance, he has no such observations to make; on 24 and 38, a great many. While there is no system, his choice of difficulties to focus on is not random, nor are his observations unconnected with one another. Zigabenus concentrates on difficulties which might arise over

Hebraisms embedded in the LXX text,²³ on difficulties a reader might encounter in construing the Greek of *Psalms*, and on David's use of figurative language.

The point of most of the comments on passages which contain Hebraisms is usually that the troublesome Greek expressions are "normal" in Hebrew, or at least normal in the Hebrew style of the authors of Hebrew sacred scripture. As for the grammatical questions, it is remarkable how elementary most of the problems addressed are. It is not hard to imagine a student having trouble when he encountered a phrase which is proper in Hebrew but unusual in Greek; but it is often hard to see where any difficulty might have arisen over the text at, for example, 22:4, 293B; 16:4, 216A, or in most of the passages whose syntax Euthymius calls *adiaphoros*. All in all, the "problems" are quite elementary.

Somewhat less elementary are problems which arise in passages where one expected verbal form is substituted for another (as at, e.g., 17:26, 237C, interestingly described as τὸ σχῆμα, ὄνομα ἀντὶ μετοχῆς) or where pleonasm is encountered (as in those cases where a word is considered περιττός, e.g. *ad* 34:24, 404A; 35:2, 405C; 38:7, 444A; 43:22, 485C). Zigabenus' observations on those passages which exhibit ἐπίτασις (e.g. 2:12, 88AB; 9:6, 144B; 34:4, 393C), περίφρασις (e.g. 7:6, 120B; 10:1, 165B; 26:11 f., 325AB), ἀναδίπλωσις (see *ad* 21:5, 277B; 23:8, 301A; 34:21, 401B), or ὑπερβατόν (e.g. 39:5, 449CD; 44:6, 493A, cited there along with περίφρασις) are similarly addressed to difficulties a student might have in recognizing deliberate *pleonasmos*. All of these *schemata*, it will be recalled, are associated with *pleonasmos* in the handbook tradition.²⁴

In that tradition, pleonasm is used by speakers and writers to achieve such effects as vividness, clarity and emphasis.²⁵ So too the other tropes and figures noted by Zigabenus: ἐρώτησις, προσωποποιία, synecdoche, and, above all, metaphor. It is these figures and tropes, it seems, that sum up what might be called David's style.²⁶

But style is not merely a grammatical thing. Style, the Byzantines knew as well as the Ancients, has ends for which it is employed. Style, in short, is not just a matter of concern for grammar; it is rhetorical. It is in this way that Zigabenus' observations on audience, which we noted before, become noteworthy; and it is in those observations that one of the main

²³ Zigabenus, of course, almost certainly knew no Hebrew. Such information appears in the various *catenae*, however.

²⁴ "Pleonasm" is a shifting concept in the tradition. It is counted as a *schema* by Alexander (8.421 f. W), Tiberios (8.527W), Zonaios (8.673W), and Phoebammon (8.497 f. W); a trope by Tryphon (8.726W) and Gregory of Corinth (8.761 f. W); and as a mere πάθος of λέξις (cf. Apollonius Dyskolos, *De syntaxi* [Uhlig-Schneider: Leipzig 1878-1910], I. ii. 149, 267, etc.; Manuel Moschopoulos, *Opusc. Gram.* [ed. Titze: Leipzig / Prague 1822], pp. 27 ff.).

²⁵ Cf., e.g., Tiberios 8.563W; Phoebammon 8.501 ff. W; Gregory of Corinth 8.771W.

²⁶ Or perhaps, more generally, the "prophetic" style.

goals of the commentary is achieved—to clear up whatever obscurities stem from the fact that (*Proleg.*, p. 61D)

διαφόροις γὰρ κέχρηται τὸ προφητικὸν ἔθος εἰ καὶ μὴ ἐν πᾶσι·
 συνεσκιασμένα γὰρ τὰ πλείστα διὰ τὴν τῶν ἀκροατῶν
 ἀπειθειάν καὶ σκληρότητα.

III

Zigabenus' commentary is unusual in paying so much attention to grammatical and rhetorical questions. No other Byzantine commentary, in fact, contains as much. Very little of it can be found in the "principal sources" Jugie points to; and not much more of it is to be found in those two "Antiochene" exegetes, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodorus of Tarsus,²⁷ both of whom wrote commentaries with which Zigabenus was evidently familiar.

One must not, of course, confuse familiarity with influence. As it happens, such evidence as we find of Zigabenus' familiarity with Theodore and Diodorus is rather thin. I have been able to discover only the following possible resemblances:

Theodore Mopsuestia

ad 30:3: Ὑπεράσπισον καὶ ἐπάμυνον ἐν τοῖς κακοῖς. Ἰδίωμα δὲ τοῦτο Ἑβραϊκόν, ἀντὶ τοῦ ὑπεράσπισον λέγειν γενοῦ μοι εἰς θεὸν ὑπερασπιστήν.

Diodorus of Tarsus

ad 16:8: παραβολικῶς λέγει "τῶν περύγων σου" καὶ μεταφορικῶς ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν ὀρνέων τῶν ταῖς πτέρυξιν ἀσφαλιζομένων τοὺς νεοττούς.

ad 18:2: εἶωθεν γὰρ ἐν πολλοῖς τὸν ἕνα πληθυντικῶς καλεῖν· ἰδίωμα δὲ ἐστὶν Ἑβραϊκόν.

ad 38:7: τὸ πλὴν καὶ τὸ μέντοι γε οὐδεμίαν εἰσφέρει διάνοιαν· ἀπὸ γὰρ τοῦ Ἑβραϊκοῦ ἐπισύρεται.

Zigabenus

τὸ "εἰς θεὸν ὑπερασπιστήν" ἀντὶ τοῦ "θεὸς ὑπερασπιστής"· ἰδίωμα γὰρ τοῦτο τῆς Παλαιᾶς.

16:7: . . . ἐκ μεταφορᾶς τῶν ταῖς ἑαυτῶν πτέρυξι σκεπόντων τοὺς νεοττούς πετεινῶν.

"οὐρανοὺς" δὲ λέγει τὸν ὑπὲρ τὸ στερέωμα, πληθυντικῶς χαρακτηρί χρησάμενος ἀντὶ ἐνικοῦ, κατὰ τὴν Ἑβραϊδα διάλεκτον. . . .

τὸ "πλὴν" ἐνταῦθα περιττόν τινες ἐνόμισαν. . . .

²⁷ I have consulted the edition of R. Devresse, *Le commentaire de Théodore de Mopsueste sur les Psaumes*, Studi e testi 93 (Vatican City 1939); and that of J. M. Olivier of Diodorus' *Commentarii in psalmos*, Corpus Christianorum, Series graeca 6 (Louvain 1980).

ad 39:2: ὁ διπλασιασμός σημείον ἐστὶν ἐπιτάσεως . . . "γιγνώσκων γνώση" ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀκριβῶς "γνώθι."

ὁ τοιοῦτος διπλασιασμός συνήθης μὲν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις· ἔστι δὲ ἐμφαντικὸς ἐπιτάσεως, ὡς τὸ "ἰδὼν ἰδον" καὶ "γιγνώσκων γνώση" ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀκριβῶς "γνώση." . . .

ad 48:5: "παραβολήν" γὰρ ἐνταῦθα τὸ διήγημα λέγει. δῆλον δὲ ὅτι παρὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου ἐδιδάχθη καὶ σχηματίζει τὸν λόγον ὥσανεὶ δι' ἀκοῆς μαθὼν τὰ τοιαῦτα παιδεύματα.

λέγει δὲ "παραβολήν" τὰ αἰνίγματα· καὶ γὰρ αἰνιγματώδη τὰ προφητικά εἰσι, διὰ τὴν ἀσάφειαν τῶν κεκρυμμένων νοημάτων.

As is quite evident, there is little to indicate that Zigabenus was particularly influenced by either Theodore or Diodorus. In fact, while there are some cases where all three comment on the same verse, or even phrase, from *Psalms*, they seldom agree either about what requires comment or, when they agree about that, what the proper interpretation is.²⁸

These comparisons suggest that Zigabenus' commentary stands apart in an important respect from any other exegetical traditions we find in Byzantine commentary. If there was a grammatical-rhetorical tradition he drew upon—and it is hard to believe there was no such tradition—it has been lost.

IV

A few other questions are raised by what we have seen here, none of which is likely ever to be answered satisfactorily. First, for whom did Zigabenus write his commentary? On the basis of the rather elementary nature of the problems—particularly the syntactic ones—he addresses, and in view of the tone and organization of the prolegomena, it seems likely that the commentary was meant for young scholars midway through their grammatical studies. We know that the study of *Psalms* was assigned early in the curriculum, and there certainly were schools in late eleventh-century Constantinople that catered to such a clientele.²⁹

Second, if it is likely that the commentary was produced in a school setting, which school? Nothing I have been able to find gives any hint. There are no internal clues in the commentary itself. There is no mention anywhere in the chronicles or registers of Zigabenus as either a διδάσκαλος

²⁸ Compare, e.g., Diodorus and Zigabenus on 16:12, 39:2, 48:5, 48:10b; and Theodore and Zigabenus on 16:14, 18:6, 15:7. Theodore on 26:6 is almost identical to Diodorus *ad loc.*, but both differ considerably from Zigabenus.

²⁹ Cf. L. Bréhier, "L'enseignement classique et l'enseignement religieux à Byzance," *Revue d'Histoire de Philosophie et Religion* 21 (1941), 49 ff., 65 ff. Unfortunately, no one has yet—for very understandable reasons—done for the eleventh century what Robert Browning did for the twelfth in "The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the Twelfth Century," *Byzantion* 32 (1962), 167–202; 33 (1963), 11–40.

or a προξυμὸς τῆς σχολῆς in any school known to be in operation in Zigabenus' time, for example, that at the monastery of Theodore Sphorakios or at any other branch (what Browning has called a "college") of the Patriarchal School.³⁰ He was not the Euthymius who is thought to have composed the oration in honor of the girdle of the Virgin in the church of Our Lady of Chalkoprataia, where there was a *didaskaleion*;³¹ nor is our Euthymius the Euthymius associated with the monastery at Peribleptos.³²

On the other hand, it is certain that our Euthymius is the same Euthymius Zigabenus whom Anna Comnena characterizes as γραμματικῆς . . . εἰς ἄκρον ἐληλακότα καὶ ῥητορικῆς οὐκ ἀμελέτητον ὄντα καὶ τὸ δόγμα ὡς οὐκ ἄλλος τις ἐπιστάμενον (*Alexiad* 15. 9), an old friend of the imperial family (she tells us),³³ the μοναχὸς Euthymius who was commissioned by Alexios I to compose a refutation of "all heresies," and did compose such a treatise, the *Panoplia* which fills PG 130. Alexios' choice must have been based on high recommendation as well, perhaps even on the basis of first-hand acquaintance with his virtues as a commentator.³⁴ Zigabenus was not then a mere teacher, but a monk of impressive learning, a scholar supremely knowledgeable in the arts of interpretation and argumentation who had not succumbed to the temptations of idle *schedographia* or to the charms of unorthodox and pagan philosophies, as so many, in Alexios' view, had done. And a monk like that could have found a place in a monastery such as that of St. George at Mangane, close to the imperial palace and the emperor himself, and possessed of a considerable library.

This is all quite speculative, of course, the sort of speculation we must occasionally turn to in the study of Byzantine grammar, rhetoric and exegesis. What is not a matter of speculation, however, is the fact that Euthymius Zigabenus is extraordinary among the commentators on *Psalms* that are known to us from the Byzantine era. If ever the history of Byzantine exegesis should be written, Zigabenus will be seen to represent an important facet of it.

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³⁰ On such schools and their locations, cf. R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères* (Paris 1953), pp. 159 ff., on St. Theodore Sphorakios. See also *ibid.* 412 (St. Peter's, where Niketas of Herakleia produced a commentary on Luke); 246 ff. (Theotokos Chalkoprataion), and further Bréhier, 63 ff., Browning, 177 f.

³¹ Cf. Jugie, "La vie" (above, note 4), 223. Jugie points out that the oration attributed to Zigabenus in Vat. gr. 1671 dates from the tenth century or before.

³² Jugie, "Euthymius," col. 1580.

³³ *Alexiad* 15. 9: μοναχόν τινα Ζυγαβηνὸν καλούμενον, γνωστὸν μὲν τῇ δεσποίνῃ καὶ πρὸς μητρὸς ἐμῇ μάμμη. . . .

³⁴ As is well known, Alexios and his wife were noted for their piety and interest in theological and exegetical matters.

